Raids at the premises of Wholesalers of vegetables

657. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons arrested so far for selling salt at inflated rates in Delhi;

(b) what steps have been taken to curb the price rise of vegetables, specially of tomato and potato in Delhi which have gone byond the reach of lower and middle strata of society; and

(c) whether any raid was conducted at the premises of wholesalers of vegetables and cold storages; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) No arrests have been made by the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi for selling salt at inflated rates.

(b) In order to contain the price of onions and potatoes, the Govt, of NCT of Delhi, with the assistance of Govt, of India, started sale of these commodities through the governmental/ cooperative cutlets at subsidised rate of Rs. 10/- and *II*- respectively w.e.f. 8.7.98, the sale of potatoes has been discontinued in view of stability in prices of this commodity.

(c) As per reports from Government of NCT of Delhi, a strict watch was kept in Delhi and cold storages were checked, but no hoarding of vegetables was noticed.

Middleman between producers and consumers of vegetables

658. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have studied the tiers of middle-men operating between the actual producer and the actual consumer of common vegetables like potato, onion, brinjal, cabbage, cauliflower, ginger etc.;

(b) the difference between the price earned by the producer and that paid by the consumer, item-wise during the last three months;

(c) the infrastructure available to the producer to reach the retail outlets like cold storage, transport facility etc. State-wise;

(d) whether Government would augment the infrastructure to cut down the intermediatary tiers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) The Government has not conducted any study about the middlemen operating between actual producer and actual consumers of common vegetables. The difference between the price received by the producer and price paid by the consumer on each item depends upon the availability in the market and is governed by market forces. No special infrastructure facilities are provided to vegetable producers to transport their produces to cold storages, market etc.

(b) and (c) Data on these aspects are not collected by the Government.

(d) and (e) The Government does not exercise any control on the marketing of common vegetables. These are traded in the open market on the basis of demand and supply operations. Government is providing financial assistance for the setting up of cold storages and food processing industries in different parts of the country.

Capacity of F.C.L Godowns

659. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI:
SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state;

(a) the total number of FCI owned/hired godowns in the country, state-wise;

(b) the capacity of FCI godowns State-wise; and

(c) the rate of increase in capacity of godowns of FCI and other agencies for preservation of foodgrains in comparison to the rate of production of foodgrains and the population in the country, during the last five years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER